RIGHT-TO-WORK LAWS

—John C. Cort

THE

Commonweal

Christianity's Basic Principles

REALITIES OF RELIGION

by Aelred Graham

Melville's Epic

THE ISHMAEL COMPLEX

by Patrick F. Quinn

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SECOND YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

THE LEGION'S POLITICAL JUDGMENT

ONCE AGAIN a judgment passed by the National Legion of Decency has stirred up the never-settled controversy concerning Catholics and movies. Although the tone of the controversy is excited and the voices are often strident, most of the charges have a friendly air of familiarity. We have met them so often before. But the classification which the Legion gave to "Storm Center" does introduce a new and alien note which deserves special attention.

In giving a "special classification" to "Storm Center," the Legion said: "The highly propagandistic nature of this controversial film (book burning, anti-Communism, civil liberties) offers a warped, over-simplified and strongly emotional solution to a complex problem of American life. Its specious arguments tend seriously to be misleading and misrepresentative by reason of an inept and distorted representation."

The Legion made clear that the movie was not condemned, that a separate classification was occasionally given to movies not because they were morally offensive, but because they required some explanation to protect the uninformed "against wrong interpretations and false conclusions."

Some members of the movie industry immediately complained. What, they asked, gives the Legion a special right to pass on movies? If the Legion can freely judge and classify films, they added, what is to prevent other organizations from doing the same thing? The more irresponsible of these critics invoked, without the understanding and reflection that alone render them meaningful, the principles of "freedom of expression," and of "the American way," and they spoke strongly against censorship, dictatorship and "pressure groups."

These critics failed to recognize what should by now be an axiom of our society. The alternative to state censorship is the effort of private citizens acting effectively and responsibly. To be effective these citizens will normally act as part of a group. In so far as they are part of a group they must also have some interests in common. And they will be judged according to how responsibly they define and perform their set task.

The Legion of Decency is just such an organization, designed to make moral evaluations of movies. There is nothing to prevent other citizens, religious or non-religious, from forming an organization with precisely the same function. And they would encounter exactly the kind of criticism that is now leveled against the Legion.

THIS MAGAZINE has defended the right—the need—of the Legion to exist; but it has criticized the Legion, as it would any like group, when it appeared that the Legion was attempting the impossible task of making a moral judgment of a film entirely apart from artistic considerations.

The movie industry implicitly recognized the rights and effectiveness of such "pressure groups" when it printed an advertisement featuring the negative review of the Legion and a positive report of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The juxtaposition was obviously, fairly and amusingly designed to criticize the Legion's judgment.

More to the point, however, was a statement of the Motion Picture Industry Council which complained that the action of the Legion went beyond "moral criticism and spiritual advice," that it was a "form of censorship with the purpose of dictating and controlling the content of motion pictures." Without debating the questionable assumptions on which the Council based the full statement of its

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case, it is clear that the Council has grasped the central issue. The Legion, which previously attempted to judge movies only as they affected public morals, has moved into new territory. It has given a separate classification to "Storm Center" not because it is morally offensive, but because it was judged to be politically objectionable. It is regrettable that the Legion of Decency has seen fit to take an action that exceeds the function it had previously assigned to itself. In order to be effective it must act responsibly within the limitations it has set itself. In making a political judgment of "Storm Center," the Legion has grievously failed to do this.

PACIFISTS ARRESTED

DURING THE recent nation-wide civil defense exercises, nineteen pacifists were arrested in New York for refusing to comply with official orders to seek shelter during a mock air raid—precisely as they had informed officials they would long before the exercises began. Among those jailed were the executive secretary of the American Friends Service Committee and four representatives of the Catholic Worker, including Dorothy Day. Last year much the same thing happened during a similar civil defense operation; eventually, all those then arrested were released after stays in jail of

MORE ON BLACKLISTING

IN The Commonweal for July 13 and July 27, we gave our views on the controversy surrounding publication of the *Report on Blacklisting,* written by John Cogley, former executive editor of this magazine. In the July 27 issue we also reprinted editorials on the subject from the Washington *Post* and the N.Y. *Times.* Substantial excerpts from other editorials appear below.

THE EDITORS.

TOLEDO BLADE
Toledo, Ohio

In issuing a report long known to be in the making on the lasting effects of blacklisting of performing artists in the television, radio, and motion picture industries, the Fund for the Republic has invited fresh criticism from those who seem to resent any attempt to point out where and how there have been violations of the basic rights of Americans. Also, it performs a service in calling attention to the quiet, almost hidden, erosion of individual freedoms which has gone on in these industries. . . . This does not seem to be at all what Sen. Karl Mundt has characterized as "still another effort . . . by the Fund for the Republic to give aid and comfort to the Communists." It is rather a commendable attempt to strengthen the rights of individuals, on which the existence of free nations utimately rests. In its candor and its temperance, this report performs a distinct service to a freer and a stronger United States.

THE INDIANA CATHOLIC AND RECORD
Archdiocese of Indianapolis

We take strong exception to the treatment given by our syndicated Hollywood columnist, William Mooring, to the Cogley report on "blacklisting" in the entertainment industry. Mr. Mooring kisses off the report as a "colossal waste of Fund for the Republic's dollars" which merely reaffirms the Fund's anti-anti-Communism. We think, on the contrary, that the factual job done by John Cogley for the Fund for the Republic is a public and patriotic service of no little consequence. It describes in fascinating detail the operation of a private but powerful system of judging who should and who should not be permitted to work in the radio and television industry.

One does not have to be the least bit un-American or anti-anti-Communist to perceive that it is dangerously wrong for a man's reputation and job to be at the mercy of a self-appointed "shadow court" which judges his political purity and his loyalty on rules of its own devising. The idea that anyone accused of Communist leanings, no matter how flimsy and unsubstantiated the charge, should have to satisfy self-appointed private judges of his innocence before he could be "cleared" for further employment is utterly foreign to American concepts of justice. It does violence to our ideals of the basic rights of an individual. . . . We wish Mr. Mooring and others of our friends would realize that we Catholics have every reason not to throw out in an anti-Communist panic either the principles of natural justice or the special legal safeguards of justice embodied in American judicial practice.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH
St. Louis, Missouri

If congressional committees can interrogate anybody about anything he writes or believes, where does that leave freedom of press and conscience? That is the question raised by the House Un-American Activities Committee's summons to John Cogley, former editor of the distinguished Catholic lay magazine, *The Commonweal.*

Mr. Cogley had been employed by the Fund for the Republic to direct two studies of blacklisting in the entertainment field. These studies detail what is common knowledge in radio, television and the motion pictures. . . . But if the Committee hearings seem only to prove Mr. Cogley's point, that certainly was not their purpose. Mr. Cogley was not invited to appear; he was ordered by subpena. He was questioned sharply. Later witnesses were permitted to impugn his motives. He was treated more as a defendant than as an editor with a right to publish what he thought or saw.

In short, a blacklist hearing appears to have been a facade for retaliation against a writer whose findings displeased the House Un-American Activities Com-

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varying durations and after encountering an extraordinary amount of obtuseness and abuse at the hands of the police, jailors and one N.Y. magistrate. This time, the treatment they received was much better; at this writing all except one are out on bail.

The editors of this magazine do not share the pacifist views of those arrested. But that, of course, is not the point. Pacifists like these sincerely believe there is no adequate defense against the H-bomb; they believe that air raid drills only mislead the public into a false sense of security about the nature and dimensions of any future war. That they have a certain point on their side is indicated by the fact that N.Y. civil defense officials themselves estimate that approximately four and one-half million residents of the metropolitan area would have been killed in the recent "raid."

As far as the law itself is concerned, if the matter were ever to reach a high court—which seems unlikely—it might turn out that the pacifists have a stronger legal case than is now generally conceded. The police power of the state goes very far in an emergency situation, but how far would the courts let this fact override the normal rights of citizens in what is a mock, not a real, emergency?

In any case, entirely apart from this aspect of the matter, this nation has always leaned over backward to protect the rights of conscience; our draft

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mittee. But what if Congress had the right to summon any author with whom it disagreed, or if writers generally lived in fear of being ordered before a committee for expressing their opinions? Free expression could not endure in such a climate of intimidation. . . .

THE PILOT
Archdiocese of Boston

(The *Pilot* disagrees with The Commonweal's opinion that the action of the House Un-American Activities Committee in this case constitutes a threat to freedom of the press, but says:)

The Fund for the Republic has become in many circles a bad word, and in some others at least a suspicious one. This unfortunate climate makes it difficult for large numbers of people to judge on the merits of its various products in an objective manner, since they have, almost unconsciously, prejudged the whole matter. Among many projects, the Fund is now in the public eye with a "Report on Blacklisting" prepared by John Cogley, formerly of *Commonweal,* which discusses in two volumes, blacklisting in the movies (I) and in radio-television (II). This week Mr. Cogley, as a result of the report, was summoned before the House Un-American Activities Committee.

Limiting our remarks, at this time, to the volume on the movies, we find it hard to understand just what all the excitement is about. . . . Mr. Cogley has told the story in convincing fashion with a minimum of editorial comment, but with that necessary selection of detail which makes a pattern out of a mere mass of facts. Surely the text betrays no bias in favor of either the acknowledged Communists or those who made use of the Fifth Amendment, though it shows an understandable concern over any innocent people who might conceivably have been caught up in the machinery intended to catch the Reds. Some reviewers have suggested that Mr. Cogley has not "exposed" the Communist menace or any remaining traces of its power in Hollywood. This is hardly strange when we consider that he set out to make a report on "blacklisting," not infiltration. He should not be condemned for failing to write the book he never even intended to write. . . . Undoubtedly many sturdy volumes could have been filled with facts not mentioned in the present report, but then we might have had an over-exhausting as well as an over-exhaustive study. Judging what we actually have before us, only the captious will attempt to impugn the honesty, the ability and the integrity which characterizes what has been done.

We do not share, then, the views (expressed elsewhere in the *Pilot*) of Mr. William Mooring who considers the whole business "old hat," colossal waste and merely confirming "the anti-anti-Communist stand" of the Fund. This last surely makes the mistake of confusing the work of the Fund with the remarks of its controversial president, Robert Hutchins. Mr. Cogley has been careful to separate the elements in the Hollywood mixture and with considered justice he has striven to give each his due as he judged it; if his judgment has differed from Mr. Mooring's it has not, for that reason, been an unjust or faulty emphasis. . . .

PROVIDENCE JOURNAL
Providence, Rhode Island

The House Committee on Un-American Activities launched its long-awaited investigation of the Fund for the Republic the other day. To suggest that the committee got off to a rocky start would be about the most charitable interpretation one could place on the opening proceedings. . . .

As its first witness, the committee summoned John Cogley. . . . Mr. Cogley was summoned by subpoena. A more gracious approach might have been to invite him to appear and testify. But instead, the committee issued an order and compelled him to appear as thought he were already under some cloud of criminal misfeasance. This raises at once a question about the committee's authority and its possible infringement on the rights of the free press. It is a question that needs to be raised whether the committee thinks so or not. . . . The impression persists that the present committee is . . . more interested in its conception of one hundred per cent Americanism than it is in the essential freedoms—and possibly even more interested in defending that shadowy practice of blacklisting than it is in bringing the practice out into the light. It is a cause for wonder and a cause for concern.

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laws, for example, provide as a matter of course for religious conscientious objection to military service. We do not see why the same spirit should not prevail in civil defense measures. The officials in charge might as well accept the fact that there are pacifists who will continue to protest, on grounds of conscience, policies which in their opinion merely condition public opinion in favor of accepting H-bomb warfare as a feasible national policy. Once civil defense officials accept this fact, it should not be too difficult to arrive at a procedure more in keeping with the American tradition of respect for conscience than is demonstrated by carting pacifists off to jail every time there is an air raid drill.

NEUTRALS AND NEUTRALISM

IN STRIVING to enunciate its position on the vexed question of neutralism the Administration has seemingly adopted the semantic theory of W. H. Auden, the poet who queried: "How do I know what I mean until I see what I have said?" Within only a few weeks the three highest spokesmen for the Administration have stated almost every possible position toward neutralism.

In a press conference, President Eisenhower spoke with such evident understanding of the neutralist position and of the military dangers to which "committed" countries were exposed that stalwart members of NATO and SEATO were left puzzled and resentful. Three days later Secretary of State Dulles left the "uncommitted" countries puzzled and resentful by stating that neutralism was obsolete, and "except in unusual circumstances, an immoral and short-sighted conception." Under questioning at a press conference later, Mr. Dulles indicated that, whatever might be said about neutralism, there were, in our harassed world, no really "immoral" neutrals, although countries which denounce collective security pacts, he felt, were promoting a "somewhat wrong view of neutrality."

In Manila, meanwhile, Vice President Nixon was also walking the semantic tightrope by explaining that the United States believes in the right of each nation to chart its own course, but "has no sympathy for that brand of neutralism which makes no moral distinction between the Communist world and the free world."

Fortunately, the actions of this government have spoken more clearly than its words. As a matter of practical, political fact, it has shown a tolerant attitude toward neutralism by continuing aid of different kinds to countries of almost every neutralist hue. That, perhaps, is the nub of the matter—that there be a greater awareness in political and editorial circles that this country is dealing, not with neutralism, but with neutralisms, and that no adjective or action is equally applicable to all.

LOCALIZED DEATH?

THE CHAIRMAN of the Atomic Energy Commission, Lewis L. Strauss, recently announced that the current series of tests being held in the Pacific confirmed the fact that "there are many factors including operational ones which do make it possible to localize to an extent not heretofore appreciated the fall-out effect of nuclear explosions."

The significance of Mr. Strauss' statement can best be seen in the light of the testimony given to a Senate subcommittee by Lieutenant General J. M. Gavin, the Army's Director of Research and Development, who declared that an all-out nuclear attack on the Soviet Union would result in the deaths of hundreds of millions, and that the path of radioactive death might well "back up" into the heart of Western Europe. It can be easily understood why Mr. Strauss stressed that the current tests have great "humanitarian" importance.

We wish, however, that Mr. Strauss had given the world stronger grounds of assurance in an "humane" H-bomb. His vaguely worded statement can lead only to conjecture, and the prevailing conjecture is that there is no "humane" H-bomb, but only a choice of "humane" operational factors in its employment.

In fact, Joseph and Stewart Alsop, in their syndicated column, have strongly indicated that Mr. Strauss is really saying something which is neither new nor reassuring—that the United States has successfully detonated an H-bomb two or more miles in the air. Such a high-burst bomb does not result in a radioactive rain as do bombs which explode nearer the earth's surface, and coupled with such "operational factors" as speed and wind direction would make it possible to "localize" the nuclear fall-out to a greater degree than in the case of bombs detonated nearer the ground.

But certain military targets cannot be effectively destroyed by high altitude bombs, and an attacking force cannot always choose "humane" operational factors. If Mr. Strauss' assurance means no more than this, he is cruelly playing upon the hopes of his fellow countrymen and the peoples of the world. If his assurance does have more substance than this, he should make it clear immediately.

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Realities of Religion

"AS SOON AS WE THINK OF GOD'S PRESENCE WITHIN THE HUMAN SPIRIT, WE ARE BROUGHT FACE TO FACE WITH THE TIMELESS REALITIES OF RELIGION"

AELRED GRAHAM

WITH HIS accustomed insight, St. Thomas Aquinas was careful not to give to religion, in its limited "devotional" sense, the status of a theological virtue. For him a fundamentally religious outlook on life was, in the last analysis, the only realistic one; but he saw also that religion can be regarded as a specialized human activity. So considered, he observed that, although one could not love God too much, one could be *too* religious. The public *cultus,* even one's private prayers, could receive too much, just as they could receive too little, attention. In other words, religion, being a moral virtue, can suffer from excess as well as deficiency. Virtue misapplied becomes vice; there can be religious practices whose total effect on conduct is neutral or even bad. A "true" religion does not necessarily guarantee to its adherents mental balance or integrity of life. To achieve fulfilment we need something more than religious zeal and devotion.

Having been requested to take what has turned out to be an undistinguished collection of essays, *Contemporary Problems in Religion,* edited by Harold A. Basilius, (Wayne University Press) as a starting point for some general comment on their theme, I must confess to an initial distaste for the convention of raising large questions to which no adequate answers are provided. Synthetic judgments without a preliminary analysis of their terms are always unsatisfactory. Thus, when religion is defined, as it is by one of these writers, as "all those cultural manifestations . . . that result from the human feeling of cosmic awe," we know at once that no significant contribution to the subject need be expected. Dr. Paul Tillich, keeping closely to his theme, provides the most valuable essay in the book, marred though it is by a manner that is unpersuasively oracular. Existentialism and symbolism are somewhat esoteric topics in themselves; taken together, they merit a more tentative approach. The foundations of Dr. Tillich's own thought can hardly sustain a superstructure quite so magisterial.

Books of this kind, however, are nearly always worthy of attention. They take account of disturbing facts. The relevant facts in this case are that our contemporaries are demonstrably in need of some religious philosophy of life, while being at the same time unequal to accepting the case as presented by religion's professional exponents. Such a study as Will Herberg's *Protestant-Catholic-Jew* abounds in well-documented observations along these lines. Too many people, Catholics included, appear to be seeking, not the God of consolation, but the consolation of God—a very different matter. Consequently religion may be unconsciously utilized as a device for keeping people sane, more or less happy, reconciled to themselves and socially acceptable.

Unfortunately, Mr. Herberg, who is obviously much influenced by Reinhold Niebuhr, can himself offer only a very partial solution to the difficulties he propounds. "Biblical faith" according to the mind of Luther, as mediated through Kierkegaard and the Christian existentialists, has much more to be said for it than is commonly allowed by Catholic controversialists; but it is far from being the whole story. "In Jewish-Christian faith," writes Mr. Herberg, "the word of redeeming grace comes only after the word of judgment has shattered all human claims to security and self-sufficiency." A sobering thought, no doubt. To what extent does it happen to be relevant?—or even true?

The Christological histrionics of Luther, for all that anyone can prove to the contrary, may well have been as sincerely felt as those of St. Augustine or, for that matter, St. Paul; but they have presented the modern world with a doubtful legacy. The merely personal notes in "Paulinism" have been modulated to the Western Church by the Greek Fathers; between Augustine and modern Catholicism stands Aquinas. But who has there been to redeem Luther from his own extravagances? Not Kierkegaard, certainly. In much that passes for Christianity today the individual appears no less the egocentric salvation-seeker, no less in need of reassurance and emotional comfort, than was the great religious revolutionary himself. Earnest as the search for God may be, its fruits, in terms of human selflessness, have yet to come to light.

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HERE WE may take note of the fashionable theological interest in such emotions as awe, fear, dread and every form of anxiety. In up-to-date religious circles there is little hope of being taken seriously unless one can exhibit one or more of these Kierkegaardian symptoms. Kierkegaard himself was too much

the intellectual wholly to accept the Lutheran sentimentalism, but his revolt against the spurious universalism of Hegel landed him, despite himself, among the unmitigated, though far from rugged, individualists. Sympathy for the loneliness of man, even when actuated by "Biblical faith," should not distract us from attempting, at least, to account for this singular state of affairs.

To suppose that what should be the final adjustment to God, man and the world of nature, connotes misery, or at least a Hamlet-like self-preoccupation, hardly commends itself to common sense. Those who have succeeded in attaining the basic simplicities that underlie religion reveal in their attitude towards life, not the existentialist's sense of *anguish,* but something more closely akin to the contemplative's "sober certainty of waking bliss."

Protestantism can bring no lasting cure to the world's sickness because its diagnosis of the human predicament is incomplete, it leaves too much out. Protestantism at its best has the note of urgency, the humility before God, the insistence on total committal to Christ, which are basic ingredients of authentic Christianity. Where the Reformation position fails is in its incapacity to bridge the gap between the profane and the sacred. Writers like Mr. Herberg complain that religion in America today is almost completely secularized. There is much in what he says; but such an implied judgment of human motives cannot really be sustained. Nor should it be forgotten that a religion which is truly God-centered will always include a concern for the daily activities of God's creatures. Whatever is to be understood by "Biblical faith"—an ambiguous and question-begging phrase—it presupposes an intellectual leap in the dark equivalent to an abdication of the rights of reason such as the central Christian tradition has never tolerated.

Implicit in the Protestant position is the heart-stirring appeal—"Back to Christ." The challenge is always relevant, since Christianity's concern is with the Jesus of fact rather than of fiction. But when this interest in history—the attempt to recapture the spirit of the "primitive Church"—dominates the mind to the exclusion of those timeless considerations which bring us to the heart of religion, then the relation between man and God is robbed of its most significant dimension. Here it may be pointed out that there can be no such entity as "Jewish-Christian faith." Though rooted in Judaism, Christianity from the first over-leaped and transcended its source, the new wine of the Gospel bursting open the old wine-skins of Hebraism. Israel's characteristic absorption in the time-sequence, looking to the temporal fullfilment of the Messianic age, was so modified by apostolic Christianity as to constitute a world-view that is specifically different. When the man of today confesses *"Credo in unum Deum,"* his mind is carried beyond the anthropomorphic imagery of "Biblical faith" to the timeless, passionless God, both transcendent and immanent, known yet uncomprehended, proclaimed by the Catholic Church.

When, for example, Father J. Courtney Murray observes that "what is timeless is always timely," he is drawing attention to a truth much more worthwhile reflecting on than what underlies the existentialist rhetoric. He is referring to the natural law, itself but an echo of God's eternal law, immanent within the human spirit. This concept of natural law, rejected as unevangelical by Luther and his followers, is an integral part of the structure of Catholicism. Not only does it provide an intelligible medium of reception for, and line of rational continuity with, divine revelation; it supplies also a basis of contact and possible reconciliation with philosophies and religious systems apparently at odds with Christianity. The Spirit that could harmonize such disparate traditions as Hebraism and Hellenism may one day include within the whole the abiding content of Hinduism and Buddhism.

NOTHING in the religious situation today, however, offers Catholics any grounds for complacency. Despite the inherent limitations of Protestantism, its doctrines are being presented with a sincerity and effectiveness that command widespread attention. No cause can be disregarded that is served by minds of such distinction as—to quote only names already referred to—Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich. Catholicism in America has yet to discover exponents of comparable talent. Our failure seems to lie, not so much in a lack of native intelligence, as of the requisite background of learning, breadth of interest and sense of priorities. What we insist on placing in the foreground is not always of the first importance. At levels below that of the Church's official magisterium, Catholicism's richest treasures seem often to be concealed rather than displayed to view.

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How much truth, to take one instance, is there in the criticism that, generally speaking, Catholic theological activity scarcely touches on matters of universal human interest? What is chiefly discussed, so it is alleged, are the remoter ramifications of ecclestiastical discipline, the minutiae of Church ritual and Sacramental practice, and the intimacies of sexual behaviour. As for advancing our knowledge of God and man and nature, the assumption appears to be that these subjects have long since been exhausted. All that remains is simply to draw inferences from the firmly established data. Whatever may be thought about comment of this sort, it is at least worth recalling that for St. Thomas Aquinas the dominating interests were in fact God and man and nature. Having spent a lifetime studying and expounding these topics, he was left only with the consciousness of his own inadequacy. Far from supposing that such questions could ever be treated as closed, he reached a point of enlightenment when all that he had written about them seemed to him to be so much straw.

What we of the clergy tend, perhaps, to lose sight of is that our specifically clerical preoccupations do not have, even for the faithful, either the interest or importance that professional vanity might prompt us to suppose. Consider the two questions which, whatever the variety of their formulation, take precedence before all others for any enquiring mind: What is the nature of ultimate reality? What should my attitude to that reality be? The Catholic answer to the first question, in common with all other Christian and most non-Christian religions, is that ultimate reality, *ens realissimum,* is nothing other than, in St. Thomas's phrase, "what men call God." The answer to the second question, about which there is equal agreement, is that the individual's attitude should take the form of that alert and unfailing responsiveness which is the chief constituent of man's love for God. Obviously we are here at the core of religion, at the level from which church loyalty and ritual worship derive whatever permanent significance they can claim.

Exponents of Catholicism may profitably ask themselves whether or not they are apt to take for granted as being widely understood what in fact most requires elucidation. We have to keep in mind the possibility of Christianity's basic principles being buried so deeply beneath a weight of what are intended to be practical applications as to be almost lost to view. Thus, on the word of Christ himself, the sum total of religion is to love God above all things and to love our neighbor as ourselves. On this proposition there is no dispute. What is frequently overlooked is that a lifetime is not long enough to penetrate its meaning. Truthfully we may tell ourselves and others that we shall foster this twofold love by attending Mass and frequenting the Sacraments. In doing so, however, we shall still have furnished no reply to the ever-recurring, vitally absorbing, never yet fully answered questions—Who is God? What is love? The reader may check for himself on which Sunday it was that he last received enlightment on either of these themes from a Catholic pulpit.

WHAT SEEMS most to be called for is not that we should hasten to seek concrete applications for the Catholic premises, as that we should submit the premises themselves to contemplative analysis. In no context could this be more timely than with reference to the root principle of orthodox Christianity—the Church's teaching about God Himself. As is so often the case at given historical moments, one of the two all-significant facets of the generally accepted doctrine has come to be emphasized at the expense of the other. In our own day God's transcendence above His creatures overshadows, in the minds of the faithful, His immanence within them. The point to be safeguarded under this spatial, and therefore partially misleading, imagery of "transcendence" and "immanence" is that God is as distinct from His creatures as the infinite is from the finite, and yet, simultaneously, present within the creature by the immediacy of the divine substance.

The doctrine of the divine transcendence is largely inherited from Old Testament Judaism. It was evolved, providentially, by Israel as a protection against idolatry; it is a corrective of any tendency to pantheism and the worship of nature. That God dwelt in heights inaccessible was so firm a conviction of Christ's contemporaries that it prevented the majority of them from recognizing Him as divine. We may note further that the Lord's "otherness" is a central feature of modern Protestant-

ism, providing the appropriate background to the dramatic dialogue which its chief exponents are in the habit of imaginatively reconstructing between God and man. In fairness, it should be added that most forms of liturgical prayer, not least much that is implied in the ritual of the Mass, both presuppose and stress the truth that God is now enthroned in the highest heaven.

The obvious, though legitimate, anthropomorphism of these notions has its counterpoise in the wholeness of incarnational Catholicism. From the earliest date it

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was written into the record that God was not far from any one of us, that in God we live and move and have our being, even that in some way we are sharers in God's own nature. That these aspects of the matter were imperfectly apprehended is proved by such subsequent developments as penitential rigorism and ludicrously juridical theories of how salvation is achieved. Fortunately St. Thomas appeared on the scene to insist that sin leaves man's natural goodness essentially untouched, to point out that divine grace makes human nature more truly itself, and to declare his cordial agreement with St. Augustine's teaching that God is a greater reality within us than is our own being. From the perspective of Christology the divine immanence has recently been stressed in a succession of essays on Christ's Mystical Body; though it is at least arguable that this doctrine is still very superficially understood. The available evidence, at any rate, suggests that the discussion has yet to pass from a rhetoric that seeks to edify to an analysis which seeks intelligible coherence.

AS SOON AS we think of God's presence within the human spirit, we are brought face to face with the timeless realities of religion; we have reached the heart of the matter. God, being a spirit, is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth—and truth, like love itself, is beyond history. Only at this level can we communicate freely both with God and with all his creatures. Love, turned towards God, is a joyful self-surrender; towards man, a compassionate insight that enables us to see every embodiment of human nature as in some way one with ourselves. We may assert our private personalities against an alien exploitation, but never against God or our fellow-humans as they are related to God. Christian "personalism," as it is sometimes called, should not be allowed to hide from view what the people of the East have understood perhaps better than we of the West—"When the ego has been forgotten, all problems end."

Let it be said in conclusion that these remarks are offered, tentatively enough, by way of stimulating thought on themes too large for development within these pages. If no writer on religion should appear too sure of himself, neither has he any business ministering to self-complacency, whether his own or other people's. The preacher of the Gospel must be ready to afflict the comfortable as well as comfort the afflicted. Maybe it will do none of us any harm to think of Catholicism's most vital message in simpler terms than we normally do. Perhaps it can all be summed up in the words of a poet whose name I have forgotten:

"Learn you to love who loved never;
You who have loved, love anew."

CATHOLIC VIEWS

Right-To-Work Laws

JOHN C. CORT

THE CONTROVERSY over "right-to-work" laws, both inside and outside the Catholic Church, will not die. Last month the Louisiana Senate and House of Representatives passed a bill repealing that state's "right-to-work" law by votes of 21 to 18 and 57 to 44 respectively. That leaves seventeen states that still outlaw any form of union security provision, such as the union shop or maintenance of membership. Under these a new employee must join the union or those who join must maintain their membership for the duration of the contract. The Taft-Hartley Act since 1947 has forbidden any form of closed shop—the practice of hiring only those who are already members of the union. (It hurts me even more than it does you to keep repeating these textbook definitions, but we might as well be sure we know what we're talking about.) Actually, a total of twenty-one states had passed these laws, but, in addition to Louisiana, the states of Maine, New Hampshire and Delaware have repented and repealed theirs.

In Louisiana, Archbishop Rummel made a strong statement opposing the law when it was first introduced in 1954. This led to the open defiance of the Archbishop by sixty-six Catholic businessmen. In Connecticut, Archbishop O'Brien took a stand similar to that of Archbishop Rummel, but without a similar reaction. The Bishops of Utah did likewise. And in other states priests appeared before legislative committees to testify against such bills.

Now comes Father Edward Keller, C.S.C., of Notre Dame University, with a new book called *The Case for Right-to-Work Laws: A Defense of Voluntary Unionism* (Heritage. $1.50). In this work, Father Keller complains that "the opposition in the Catholic

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press has been so one-sided as to create the impression that there is only one side to this controversial issue."

As a matter of fact, during the Louisiana dispute the Catholic businessmen quoted from Father Keller's earlier comments on right-to-work laws and I wrote (The Commonweal, April 22, 1955): "It is a tribute to the American Church that the sixty-six laymen of New Orleans could find only one doubtful quotation from one American priest to justify this assault on the security and integrity of American unions."

Since then Father Keller has discovered a few supporters among the American clergy. Father John E. Coogan, S.J., of Detroit University, in an article entitled "Can Nothing Be Said for State 'Right-to-Work' Laws?" in the *American Ecclesiastical Review* (December, 1955) found that a good deal could be said for such laws. Father Francis Connell, C.SS.R., dean of the school of theology at Catholic University, has written that he does not believe "that there is any Catholic principle which condemns the 'right-to-work' laws."

SO THE CONTROVERSY would appear to be less one-sided than Father Keller seems to think, especially when one considers the widespread circulation that is given in the business community to Father Keller's own views. For this and other reasons I would like to comment on his book, especially since I find that something I wrote for this magazine several years ago has been quoted out of context to buttress his argument. At that time I did a piece on a racketeer local in New York (Building Service Local 32E) which is an organization of building superintendents and janitors in apartment houses. Its president was later murdered under sensational circumstances. This trade is not considered to be in interstate commerce and does not therefore come under the Taft-Hartley Act, but is covered by the "Little Wagner Act" of New York State.

Under New York law a union can expel a man from membership, say on trumped-up charges, and force his employer to discharge him from his job and, in the case of 32E, where the home goes with the job, can force him from his home—provided, of course, that the union has a union shop. I wrote some indignant prose about this situation and both Fathers Coogan and Keller quote it as though it were a criticism of the union shop.

This is slightly dubious cricket because my article pointed out that under the Taft-Hartley Law no union can force an employer to discharge a man for anything but non-payment of dues. So such things are not essential to the union shop and nobody should pretend that they are.

Father Keller's eagerness to make a case leads him into some strange corners. On page thirty-five, for example, he quotes an opinion that says "the American labor movement . . . is vigorous, aggressive and effective . . . protected by law and fortified by strength . . . one of the most dominating economic, political and social institutions in the nation . . . beyond the capability of employers to destroy it, even if they so desired or attempted."

A few pages later he is making the point that unions really haven't done much to raise wage levels and that their membership is only "something over one-quarter of the labor force." Frankly, I couldn't make up my mind whether I was supposed to be afraid of the unions or to feel sorry for them.

On page thirty-six he says, "Both federal and state laws fully protect the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively without interference from their employers." The assumption here is that because a law says you can't interfere with the right to organize and bargain, therefore nobody does. Anybody who has worked in the labor movement knows that this just isn't so. There is nothing more common than the age-old practice of discrimination against employees because of their union activity and nothing more rare than the union that can prove it to the satisfaction of the Labor Board.

The reason for this is that there are a thousand ways to make things tough for an employee and still keep it looking natural. You can fire a union-minded employee and dream up a dozen plausible reasons for so doing. Even the best employees make mistakes which, if laid end to end, might seem to justify discharge in the eyes of an outsider. To prove discrimination you have to prove motive, and nothing in the lexicon of law is more difficult of proof than that.

Father Keller cites Cecil B. deMille as an example of a union member who was unjustly suspended from his union (AFRA) and forced off the air because he would not contribute to a fund for a political purpose to which he was opposed. This was in 1944, and Father Keller neglects to add that this abuse is now illegal because of the Taft-Hartley provision mentioned above. He also neglects to add that Taft-Hartley now outlaws any contributions out of union treasuries to any candidates for federal office. Because of this latter provision it is unlikely that what happened to Mr. deMille could happen again today. Because of the former provision it is impossible.

Father Keller makes much of a statement made by three Scottish Bishops in opposition to a strike in Glasgow, which had been called to enforce a union shop. He adds this: "While the strike leader was a Communist the issue was a clear-cut case of compulsory unionism. . ." But if the strike leader were a Communist the issue could not possibly be a clear-cut

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case of compulsory unionism, since, as Father Keller himself points out later, it is a much more serious thing to force membership in a Communist-led union than to compel it in one that is under sound leadership.

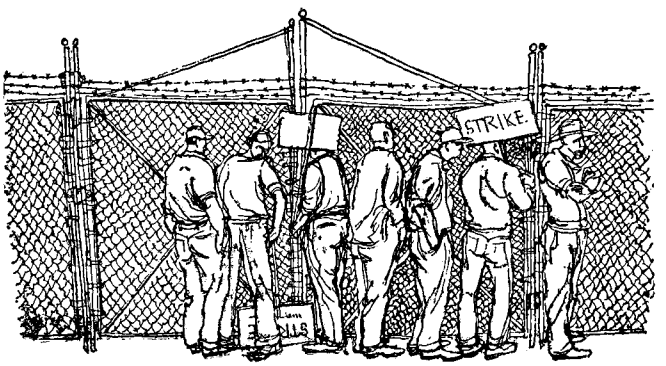
THE KEY QUESTION in Father Keller's book, however, as in all these discussions, is a question of fact: namely, is the union shop, or some form of union security, necessary to the effective operation of the average American union under the peculiar conditions of life and labor in this country? If it is necessary, then the so-called "right-to-work" laws (also called "right-to-wreck" laws) are wrong. Father Keller admits this when he says, "I would be the first to oppose 'right-to-work' laws if they unduly restricted and hampered good unionism as well as bad." Of course, he denies that they do.

Father Connell puts it another way, bringing in the moral implications: "The Catholic Church upholds the principle [of natural law] that legislation that would unduly restrict the right of workers to form unions and to act through these organizations for their reasonable welfare or that would injure social and economic progress would be immoral." But he himself questions the *fact* that such laws do "unduly restrict" the legitimate aims and operations of unions.

In other words, let the theologians stand aside and leave this argument to the practical men who have either had experience in the field or have made studies of the factual situation.

Father Keller makes three observations from experience to prove that the union shop is not necessary: 1) they do not exist in Europe, 2) the United Auto Workers, a strong union, did not have it at General Motors until 1955, and 3) the railway unions, strong unions, were not allowed to have a union shop until 1951.

The reference to Europe, I think, can be dismissed at once. The political, social, and economic customs and traditions of that continent are so different from ours that no analogies seem to me either fair or valid. Father Leo Brown, S.J., points up the vast difference in the mobility of American and European workers



("'Right-to-Work' Legislation Does Not Solve Problem," *Social Order,* March, 1955). Father Brown's study is the best one I have seen of the practical need for union security. It is amazing that Father Keller should have ignored it entirely in his little book, since it strikes directly at the factual question which he himself admits is central.

As for the UAW and the railway unions, these *are* strong unions and they did not always have the union shop, although it is significant that they kept pressing for it and finally got it. But there are many things that produce a strong union. The union shop is only one of them. Stable employment, concentration of large numbers of workers, a long and militant union tradition, highly skilled employees, effective leadership—all these things help.

It would be foolish to maintain that all American unions need security in equal doses. That is why it is so irrelevant to argue that "the American labor movement is beyond the capability of employers to destroy it."

From my experience with one local of eleven hundred members, I am much more concerned with the capability of employers to destroy this local, and if I may have concluded that they cannot destroy it, then I am concerned with their ability to weaken it. In any case it is not as strong as its members would like to see it in the face of the vastly greater strength of management, and practical experience and observation make clear that it will be stronger if it can get union shop provisions in all its contracts.

The same thing could be said, and would be said, and has been said, by ninety percent of union leaders in this country. Since this is a factual problem, who is in a better position than they to give a factual answer?

As Father Brown says: "In many service industries, in wholesale and retail trade, in those areas of manufacturing characterized by semi-skilled employment, seasonality and high turnover, I would expect 'right-to-work' laws to create organizing problems which many unions could not surmount. I would expect unions to disappear in many establishments and to be rendered almost wholly ineffectual in others. Briefly, I would expect the effects of this legislation to be most severe where the unskilled and semi-skilled are employed *and perhaps where unions are most needed.*" (emphasis added)

The testimony of the unions working under the "right-to-work" laws will bear out Father Brown's expectations to the last dot. If anyone doubts it, let him consider the heartbreaking, unionbreaking experience of the AFL and CIO in the South.

Father Keller has made some points worth considering, and he states the problem correctly, but his conclusion is wrong because his facts are wrong. I hate to seem pontifical, but it's as simple as that.

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THE SCREEN

PILGRIMS' PROGRESS

THE ITALIANS have sent over so many middling films lately that one is likely to go overboard in welcoming a new import that is both beautiful and meaningful. Displaying some first-rate cinema that is a happy blending of surrealism and Italy's old neo-realism, "La Strada" is fairly bursting with beauty and ideas, and stands with the best of Italian movies. It has the joy of Rossellini's "Little Flowers of Saint Francis" and it goes beyond the loneliness of "The Bicycle Thief" by De Sica. But "La Strada" also has an originality of its own, thanks mainly to the direction of Frederico Fellini, who, with Tullio Pinelli, also wrote the story and screenplay. Director Fellini's lyrical style fits perfectly a story that is not really a story at all but a series of events that happen along the way in this well-named picture, "The Road."

It all starts by the sea where a poor woman sells her simpleton daughter to an itinerant strong man. The two hit the road on his motorcycle, live in a little trailer and stop in towns where he performs his strong-man act by breaking an iron chain with his chest. Expertly played by Anthony Quinn, the man is a loutish brute who treats the girl as his chattel and, with thoughtless cruelty, trains her to assist him in his act. And the simple-minded girl, anxious to please, finally learns to beat a drum and later to blow a trumpet; but her master is oblivious of the fact that she is a natural-born clown. This role of the lovable booby (a role portrayed through the years by the great clowns of the movies, but never by a woman) is played to perfection by Giulietta Masina with touches of Harold Lloyd's unaffected simplicity and Charles Chaplin's sensitivity. Her enjoyment of life, her ability to make people laugh, her appreciation of each new wonder she encounters along the road are a delight to behold. Unhappy about her master's promiscuity and his insensitivity toward her, she runs away—but he soon brings her back. Later, however, when she does have a chance to go, after they have joined a circus and Quinn is thrown into jail for chasing an acrobatic clown with a knife, she decides not to leave him. Curiously enough it is this acrobat (effectively played by Richard Basehart with bounce, mincing manner and an irresistable urge to tease Quinn) who teaches the girl that everything in life serves some purpose; and then she learns her purpose is to serve and save her master.

I don't know how American audiences, used to a success story and conventional boy-gets-girl ending, will take to this movie, but certainly "La Strada" is for the discriminating. Using extraordinarily poetic cinema but always clinging to realism, Fellini mixes fun and sadness, gaiety and sorrow, beauty and bestiality, and he expects you to feel the emotions his actors are portraying so well. Sometimes the incidents seem irrelevant but they all contribute to the whole. In one scene the girl wanders off in wide-eyed amazement at some lovely flowers; and in another, some children take her away from a wedding feast to make a sick child laugh; and in still another, the girl and a nun are sadly saying goodbye in a convent where she and Quinn had taken shelter. The nun consoles her by saying that she too will some day be released from this place because one shouldn't get so attached to wordly things that one loses sight of God: "You see we both travel; you follow your husband, I mine." But greater sorrow comes to the girl when she and Quinn encounter the acrobatic clown again and Quinn accidently kills him during a fight. For days afterward, the girl cries and mopes, until Quinn finally leaves in anger never to see her again. Five years later, having been unable to forget this simple girl who was the voice of his conscience, the strong man learns of her death. Overwhelmed with his loneliness, he returns to the sea and washes in a symbolic baptism. For he has come to understand the meaning of her love and devotion. If ever a film was overflowing with love for man, be he saint or sinner, it is "La Strada." And every contribution to the film—the cast, the music of Nino Rota, the photography of Otello Martelli, the entire Ponti-De Laurentiis production, as well as Herman Weinberg's English subtitles—is in line with Fellini's magnificent conception of the road of life down which, no matter how fast one runs, one cannot escape the Hound of Heaven.

AUDIENCES who wish a change of pace may retire to "Secrets of the Reef," a documentary produced by Alfred Butterfield at Marineland, Florida. With nary a man in the cast, it is a nature-drama, most of which takes place under the sea and features some exciting goings-on around the coral reefs off the coast of Florida. Since I know very little about the octopus, moray eel, sea horse, jellyfish, porcupine fish and all the rest of the actors in this top-notch picture, I sat bug-eyed during most of the proceedings. I'm not sure whether I was more fascinated by what I *saw* when a new crop of octopuses, sea horses or turtles were hatched or by my wonder at photographers' being able to take these splendid shots. In nature, life and death are two sides of the same story; and in the sea, a fish-eat-fish attitude seems to prevail, but I did find myself being sorry for the victims, especially the prey of jellyfish, which have no right to look like flowers and be so vicious. The film's handsome Eastman Color photography is accompanied by a narration which is both informative and amusing without getting too coy.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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COMMUNICATIONS

"PUERTO RICANS IN NEW YORK"

Caguas, Puerto Rico

TO the Editors: Anent the Puerto Rican background in Father Ivan Illich's otherwise fine article, "Puerto Ricans in New York" [June 22nd], there are three statements which are either downright erroneous or extremely misleading. To consider these statements in the order in which they appear in the article:

1. ". . . . a difference in the shade of the skin is no impediment, either to success or to marriage." I have seen the same statement in other articles on Puerto Rico, but such is simply not the truth. Any priest who has worked in Puerto Rico for any length of time can give Father Illich numerous examples of a discrimination far more subtle and just as effective as anything he will find outside the South. True, a few Negroes have risen to high positions in government and in business, but they have done so in spite of discrimination. They are the exception, not the rule. I wonder how many Puerto Rican Negroes Father will find stopping at the Caribe Hilton or attending a meeting of the Knights of Columbus or marrying into the "better" families.

2. "All Puerto Ricans know some English." Father Illich insists on this point on four different occasions in four successive paragraphs. Would that it were true. It is true that English is taught in the public schools; it is also true that at one time English was the medium of instruction in the public schools as it still is in most of the parochial schools. Most educated Puerto Ricans do speak English; many speak it flawlessly. But these are not the people who are migrating to New York. It has been my experience that very few of the migrants know any English at all; if Father Illich has found the situation otherwise, I wager that most of his migrants have learned whatever English they know since their arrival in New York. That so few know any English is because the average migrant has had very little formal schooling as well as because of serious deficiencies which exist in the English program in the public schools in spite of the best intentions of the government.

3. In his discussion of the religious background of the Puerto Rican before he leaves his homeland, Father Illich is a bit more imaginative than accurate. True, many people cannot hear Mass every Sunday, but to speak of "Those rare occasions when the priest comes to visit them in the chapel in their *barrio*" is a bit far-fetched. In almost all cases where a chapel exists in a *barrio,* the priest visits it at least once a month; in many cases, twice a month, and in a few places, every week. In the smaller towns where there are only one or two priests, necessity may limit these visits to weekdays, but in the larger towns they are almost invariably made on or over a Sunday. This weekly, bi-weekly or monthly visit of the priest is usually the occasion for a catechism class for the children, confessions, Mass and Communion, baptisms and sick calls. Very often young couples will make the preliminary arrangements for a marriage to take place on the following visit. If the priest stays overnight, he will usually have some sort of evening devotions and Benediction, as a come-on to bring the people to the chapel for confessions.

"For generations they had to baptize their own children because the priest came so seldom." If there ever was a tradition for the country people to baptize their own children it has all but disappeared. There is a custom to "echar agua—pour water," but any resemblance between this custom and lay baptism is purely coincidental. While pouring the water, the people will usually recite some prayer, anything but the necessary form for baptism. In over five years spent working for the country people, I know of only one case where one of them conferred baptism in case of necessity.

Concubinage among the poorer classes is a serious problem, but I fail to see how the Church's extraordinary form of marriage (before two witnesses but without the assistance of a priest) in any way contributes to it. It is true that in the past the conditions necessary to invoke this extraordinary form were often present, but it is a gratuitous assumption to say that this form was invoked. Certainly it would be difficult to place these conditions at the present time. Nor has the Church recognized the validity of a common law marriage between Catholics in Puerto Rico for over three hundred years.

In spite of these criticisms, however, I think that Father Illich's article was an excellent presentation of the problems presented by and to the Puerto Ricans in New York.

(*Rev.*) EDWARD J. DUNNE, C.SS.R.

OF NOTE

IGNATIUS AND THE NEW AGE

THE Summer Issue of *Thought* (Fordham University, New York 58, N. Y. $5 per year) contains an article by Father William F. Lynch, S.J., on the contemporary significance of the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius Loyola. Excerpts from this article follow:

The question which confronts us is this: What is the relationship between theology and life? Can the

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penetration into the self and the penetration into God be one and the same penetration? And in asking this question we do not at all intend to exclude all those things outside of man which are denominated reality—even, and above all, the technological reality of our day. For this reality, when rightly conceived, is, in the language of Gabriel Marcel, nothing but the larger body of man and part of his self. We have suggested that for the time being the contemporary answer is that the proportions and qualities of the self and reality as they now strike us are such that they cannot possibly serve as a passageway to God. The vague, instinctive but enormously widespread theology of today falls back upon the answers of painful division, escape, flight, magic. There were men who, in the days of Ignatius, fell back upon the same answers, though in terms of their own historical situation. What did Ignatius have to say about the question?

Certainly he wished to lead the soul to God, and if people wish to call that escape they are at times entitled to the use of their own words. But his method was not the method of escape or magic. Magical or instantaneous methods of getting at God are essentially something marked by a hatred and fear of human time and of the full, long human process. Basically they wish to do two things—and I want to lay strong emphasis on this because both contrast strongly with the Ignatian method of coming to God; because of this hatred of time they wish to use but a single, special moment of it, one that by some strange inexplicable "trick" will lead them to full glory, and they wish to deprive even that single moment of as much of its highly questionable actuality and concreteness as possible, thinking that these are blocks to the cognition of glory and beauty. Ignatius, as a perfect representative of Catholic theology, works entirely in the contrary direction. An analysis of his method will show in detail after detail that, as a seeker of God, he is completely devoted to the time process and completely devoted to its definite actuality, no matter what it is at each particular moment. Therefore his method of prayer or, shall we say, his directive for leading the soul to God has two main structural points behind it:

1. He leads the exercitant, the man making the Exercises, *proportionally* through the life of Christ. Therefore, he leads him through it step by step, forbidding him again and again to take the way of magic impatience or hatred and commanding him to stay within the pure time process as such. It is hoped that the texts which are used later will make perfectly clear what is meant by this.

2. He is incredibly, remarkably definite in his demands on the soul that the latter be altogether concrete in its consideration of that moment of time. This is that point of his technique and, we should also say, of his *theology* which is called the "composition of place." In it he insists that the one praying should submit his mind and will completely to perfect and complete *detail,* the detail of that moment which is being separately and patiently considered. Once again I hope that the naked texts will reveal precisely what he meant, and in their complete simplicity. For nothing could be simpler and barer in their style, save a mathematical treatise, than the Spiritual Exercises. It is only the impassioned and actual quality of the theology behind them which reveals the high and thoughtful life behind these few bare pages.

But we must all the time remember that it is exactly through such proportional and definite methods that he wishes to lead the soul to God and beauty, and that that is his only and ever-recurrent theme. In his method he is completely human, time-possessed and definite. But in his ultimate aim he is what some people would choose to call altogether single-minded and "fanatical." The sentences in which he reveals this aim are there to the point of abundance. For example, and most significant for his identification of the passage through the time process and the reaching of the infinite, he calls the second week of the Exercises, that where the coursing through time is most insistent, "the illuminative way" (cf. Annotation X). There are other phrases, repeated again and again, which, in the midst of the total detail of human life used by him, reveal his total single-mindedness . . . .

Finally, one has but to read the last page of the Spiritual Exercises, the Contemplation for Obtaining Love, to see that the only Ignatian objective is contemplative love, such a one, too, as soars far beyond all the loves and ecstatic, timeless leaps of the new, escape theology.

Thus, then, we have an extraordinary and at times disconcerting document which combines, in unified and manly strokes, time, detail, definiteness, actuality . . . .

We must understand that in the long debate which is going on, especially between Catholics and non-Christian writers, a debate in which this little essay pretends to be a tiny part, we are at loggerheads about the use of words. Actually they are accusing us, in their own terms, of what we are accusing them in ours. We are accusing each other of the use of magic and escapism in our separate theologies. We have said something of their vices in this direction but what of one of their fundamental attitudes toward ourselves on the same subject? I think that that attitude could be reduced to this: that fundamentally all *dogma,* all religious belief, is an abstraction, a separate formula, an invention to help us escape from the reality in which they, more than ourselves, are immersed. Moreover, we cannot expect that they will understand in a flash what our idea of doctrine, when accurately put, really is. But what essentially is that idea? If the reader will pardon my own brevity in an enormous subject

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for my own limited purposes, I think that Catholic doctrine is the very reverse of this magical idea; rather it is a divine command to the mind and the will to enter, on the divine and the human planes, into an historical, actual and *eventful* set of facts which penetrate reality to the hilt. And for this kind of summary there are two major pieces of evidence with which every reader is certainly somewhat familiar. The first is the liturgy of the Church which in its changing year reviews the events in the life of Christ. The second which comes to mind is the Apostles' Creed itself, that central statement of belief which has no magic whatsoever in it. It is a sort of summary of the *actions* of God in three forms, in the form of His eternal majesty, in the form of Christ, and in the form of that Church which claims no warrant with men unless it be itself Christ as His larger and growing Body. The Creed begins with God and ends with eternal life for men, but in between is time, that time through which Christ passed and that time through which doctrine implicitly commands us to pass. Ignatian theology is, therefore, only a scientific structuralizing, for the sake of prayer, of the fundamental shape of Catholic doctrine. . . .

Time, Ignatius knew, was only a fruitful passage through all the stages of the self, but he placed all this firmly on a Christological and theological level. Moreover, there is not a single "leap" in the whole book. . . .

MELVILLE'S EPIC

The Ishmael Complex

PATRICK F. QUINN

IT HAS been suggested by Malcolm Cowley that the great literary achievement of the last thirty years in this country has not been any single novel, drama, or poem—not even the series of books that make up Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha saga—but rather "the critical rediscovery and reinterpretation of Melville's *Moby Dick,* and its promotion, step by step, to the position of national epic."

Taking the word epic in the broad sense that Cowley probably intended, we can endorse at least part of this opinion at once. For *Moby Dick* is surely the greatest of American books, the summit of our imaginative literature. It is, in a word, *our* masterpiece in the same way that *Don Quixote* is unrivaled in Spanish and *The Divine Comedy* in Italian; and as our national epic it has resonances that perhaps only we as Americans are fully attuned to. But at the same time it belongs in the company of the world's great books. In spite of all the rediscovery and reinterpretation of the last thirty years, *Moby Dick* retains a seemingly inexhaustible interest. This is one sign of its classic stature. Another is the way in which the book continues to accumulate, as all classics do, a library of comment and explanation. That library has lately been enlarged and enriched by the work of James Baird, of Connecticut College.*

*ISHMAEL. By James Baird. The Johns Hopkins University Press. $5.50.

Mr. Quinn is a member of the faculty of Wellesley College.

Among the many things one learns, or re-learns, in reading this book is how endlessly varied is the attraction of Melville's novel, how nearly hopeless the effort to define once and for all what it is and what it means. As well as anyone, Baird knows the reasons why *Moby Dick* may be thought of as a native, or even local, work, one that could only have been conceived by a specifically American writer during one unique era, the "American Renaissance" of the mid-nineteenth century. This is the book's orbit; let it remain there! So might complain the historians of literature, who, no less than their colleagues on Observatory Hill, attempt to fix the stars in their courses and hope to find in literary constellations the kind of systematic simplicity that makes a science of astronomy possible. Baird, too, is systematic. But for his purposes it is almost irrelevant that Melville happened to be American and that his book has become our national epic. From Baird's surprising point of view, "*Moby Dick* might as well be Norwegian."

This is one of several unusual promissory notes that can be picked up in the introduction to *Ishmael.* It seems easy enough to write them; at least the formula looks simple: originality equals improbability. But to call the notes in later and redeem them, as Baird does —this is more difficult. He is certainly an original critic. At first I found his thesis so disconcertingly new as to seem merely bizarre, implausible on the face of it. However, he is also a responsible critic, a writer, that is, who has taken on a large and complex

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task and not become wearied by either its magnitude or minutiae. That I found his book more rewarding my second time through is, I think now, more a commentary on me than on the author.

HOWEVER that may be, *Ishmael* is a book that demands and deserves close attention, more of it, probably, than most of us can bring to the first reading. Susanne Langer is quoted on the jacket: "It is, I think, a profound book . . . a truly philosophical study of literature." I believe she is right. I know of no other way to account for my own reluctance to get down to one primary obligation—usually the easiest—of a reviewer, to present a summary of the book's contents. And I notice that from the outset I have conveniently simplified matters for myself by implying that Baird's volume is some kind of massive footnote to *Moby Dick*. So it is. But it is also a good deal more. The sweeping claim of the publisher is that the book shows "how Oriental and Oceanic influence changed the course of Western literature, as seen in the work of Melville, Gauguin, Emerson, Verhaeren, Stevenson, and others." This also is a distortion, one that enlarges whereas mine subtracts. Yet *Ishmael* is an intelligent and carefully planned book, one that should submit to summary in a single crowded sentence. I choose to shirk the labor of wording it. But however that ideal sentence may be phrased, it will allude to at least three main points.

The first is that *Ishmael* in its widest intention is concerned with the literary expression of primitivistic feeling. The author identifies his subject as "existential primitivism," by which term he distinguishes actual, felt experience of primitive cultures from merely theoretical, or armchair, approval of noble savagery, vedantism, chinoiserie, or some other form of faddish exoticism. Rousseau, Chateaubriand, and Whitman, for instance, were parlor primitivists of the latter kind. Baird's interest is in men like Melville, Gauguin, and Rimbaud, writers who had first-hand knowledge of Oceanic or Asian cultures, and who found in the near or far East a more expressive symbolic idiom than any available in their own Christian-Western tradition.

The book is therefore, and secondly, a study of what might be called "the Ishmael complex." Had Baird been satisfied to treat his subject in merely academic fashion he would only have determined how scientifically "sound" his primitivists were. How good an anthropologist was Melville, for example? Such a question gets only momentary notice, for the question is idle. No one in his right mind will read Melville for *facts*. The real problem is to explain his imaginative virtuosity. By placing him in the line of modern Ishmaels—self-exiled from civilization, revitalized by their experience of primitive life—Baird opens up this problem in a most suggestive way. By discussing the work of Gauguin, Leconte de Lisle, Verhaeren, and Loti (to name only some of the French references), he makes Melville the more comprehensible and illuminates their work through his. This is the basic method of the book. Baird believes that "literature, arranged comparatively, criticizes literature." Most critics would go along with this premise. Baird is unusual only in that he can make it work.

There are, then, a great many books and authors compared and discussed in *Ishmael*. But the third main point to be mentioned is that Melville is in effect the hero of the entire work and the best pages in it are appropriately those on *Moby Dick*.

IN HIS early twenties Melville sailed on a number of whaling cruises in the Pacific and returned from Hawaii as a seaman on an American warship. For nearly forty months he was at sea. He spent no more than forty days on land in Polynesia. As a flat biographical fact, the forty-month period would seem the important one. Qualitatively, however, it counts for little when compared to the brief span of his sojourn among the Marquesan islanders. This was the determining experience. Some years later he told Hawthorne that until the age of twenty-five he had had no development. Melville dated his life from his twenty-fifth year because it was then, in 1844, that he began his first book, *Typee,* and in writing it relived that crucially transforming experience. In Taipi valley, on an island in the Marquesas, Herman Melville became Ishmael. It took him time to become conscious of the change, time spent in writing, recalling, discovering. But not too long. With the remarkable fecundity of genius realizing itself, Melville turned out five large books in the next five years. And in 1850 he started *Moby Dick* with its first sentence the unforgettable invitation to the voyage: "Call me Ishmael."

No reader of Melville has responded to the invitation more fully than Baird has done. But when he calls Melville by this name he has several different things in mind. He means, for instance, the wanderer in the south seas who in his later career as a writer could never long forget the sights and sounds that in his youth he had experienced there. Even in his last work, *Billy Budd,* he must return in his memory nearly fifty years to build an image on the sound of "pouring showers in *tropical* mountains." And this in a story concerning problems of Law and Justice, with its setting a British warship, and the time of the action 1797! What Baird calls the obsessive vision of Polynesia is present here in this detail, and present as well through the entirety of Melville's work, no matter how far removed it often is from any direct reportage on his own career in the South Pacific. Normally one fails to notice

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this kind of thing. Only when the instances are assembled and related does their significance become manifest. Only a highly perceptive reader will notice these instances in the first place. By bringing out the pervasive Polynesian motif in Melville's imagery, and by his acute comments on it, Baird comes close to revealing just how the imagination of this great writer worked. In itself this would be enough to make the book a valuable contribution to our understanding of Melville. But, for Baird, this does not resolve the central problem of the Ishmael complex; it only sets that problem in a helpful perspective.

It was Hawthorne a century ago who first discerned Melville's basic dilemma, saw how important the problem of religious belief was for him. "He can neither believe, nor be comfortable in his unbelief," Hawthorne wrote, "and he is too honest and courageous not to try to do one or the other." Almost every student of Melville has recognized the justice of this remark and attempted to develop its implications. Baird is no exception. But usually the effort is to formulate a set of abstract propositions, supposedly an inventory of Melville's "ideas" on religion. Such codification is not a waste, exactly, but the effort involved does seem misdirected. Ideas as such are not important in Melville's writing. Ideas as felt, when transmuted by feeling and grasped imagistically, are. Hawthorne's remark was made of the man and thinker whom he knew as a friend. The Melville we are acquainted with is the writer, the imaginative artist. *Ishmael* is unique in that it respects both poles of this distinction and so manages to convey the impression of a "total" Melville. He was, to compress Baird's thesis into the simplest of terms, a mind of a profoundly religious cast, obscurely aware of how deficient in rite, sacrament, and symbol was the Protestant tradition in which he was reared, a man, therefore, in search of a soul. As a result of his Polynesian experience, lived and remembered, he abandoned the religious and secular orthodoxies of the West, embraced the relativistic theology and fraternal ethos that he had found in the East, and discovered his life's purpose in the creation of an unconventional, symbolistic art. This art, markedly religious in character, was dedicated to "a new restoration of belief." Or, as Baird expresses it more fully elsewhere: "As in the orthodox confirmation service of the church the rite administered signifies the individual's acceptance of duty to a traditional symbolism, a system of abstractions through which the meaning of Christian life is represented, so in the Pacific journey Melville was confirmed not in hatred, as some may suppose, but in the art of constructing symbols toward the restoration of belief . . . The tattooed skin of the Polynesian was to Herman Melville cassock and surplice, dalmatic and stole."

IN SYNOPSIS the theory looks both unlikely and unwieldy. In demonstration, however, it proves itself remarkably well, illuminating virtually everything Melville wrote, whether major or minor, in prose or in verse. To show its full relevance to *Moby Dick* is more than can be attempted here. Baird's discussion of "the dragon whale," of Moby Dick as Hindu deity, does not lend itself to succinct paraphrase; and I can only point to it, and to his discussions of whiteness, tattooing, and the symbol of the vortex, as typical of the speculative and analytic criticism which gives the whole book its distinction. Less recondite and more central to the argument is Baird's account of Queequeg, the Polynesian harpooner whom Melville describes as "George Washington cannibalistically developed." This phrase alone would make him memorable. Even without it every reader of the novel will recall Queequeg as the one really admirable member of the *Pequod's* crew, and, after Ahab, the most colorful character aboard. He stands, in fact, as the antithesis to Ahab, his "immortal health" contrasting to the mortal ego-sickness of the latter, as a soul free of self-insistence, serene, sapient, the patriarchal mentor of the novice-whaleman Ishmael. It is Baird's contention that all Melville's values, his understanding of life, death, and God, are located here, in this figure from the East. Through Queequeg Ishmael is initiated into wisdom. From what is represented by the Westerner, by Ahab, "the God-defying and God-bullying captain of Christendom," Melville turned away with feelings of pity and despair.

It will be noticed by those who have seen John Huston's recent movie that Baird does not underline Queequeg's function as a "humorous" character. Far from it. He sees him rather as the archetypal sage, the primitive man of holy wisdom. Such phrases, looked at apart from Melville's text and apart from the context of Baird's discussion, seem merely pretentious. Yet better to err on this side than err as Huston did (and maybe had to), on the side of simplification. It is Huston's opinion, nonetheless, that his movie is

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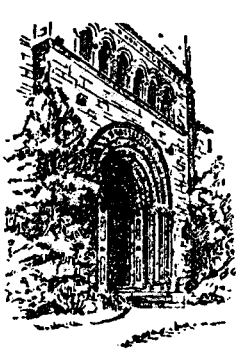

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faithful to "the spirit of Melville," and he expressed the hope last winter that "even the professors" would agree with him. Some professors will. I know of one who invested years of work in Melville research and yet understood Melville to be significant simply because he was the literary discoverer of the South Seas. No; one must dive deeper than this. The statement that best defines the spirit of Melville is one that he himself wrote: "But vain to popularize profundities, and all truth is profound." Excellent in its way as Huston's movie is, it can be no more than an invitation to the threshold of *Moby Dick*. Baird's *Ishmael* is an introduction, too, but of a quite different quality. It takes us into the profundities of Melville's work, and on into the complexities of the extraordinary mind that created it. Only a book like the one Baird has written —original, esoteric, and with an air of extravagance about it—can claim to be true to "the spirit of Melville."

BOOKS

Pathetic Grandeur of a Belfast Spinster

THE LONELY PASSION OF JUDITH HEARNE. By Brian Moore. Little, Brown. $3.50.

By WILLIAM CLANCY

MODERN "tragedy" has moved far from the majesty of Oedipus and King Lear. Its most somber dramas are played out in essentially mediocre spirits: in the death of a salesman we feel our own death and, recently, we queued up in New York to join two tramps in a hopeless wait for Godot. *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne,* too, is the tragedy of a third-rate soul, and in its pathetic history we are moved to pity and fear.

In this, his first novel, Brian Moore has done his native Belfast somewhat the same service James Joyce did his native Dublin: he has taken an Irish city and laid bare its most secret soul through characters who could not have been born elsewhere. Stephen Dedalus, at the end of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man,* goes forth from Dublin to seek freedom, but we know that Dublin's mark will be forever upon him. At the end of Mr. Moore's novel, Judith Hearne has lost everything—her pride, her friends, her faith—but she has lost them on Belfast's terms and we know that it is on Belfast's terms alone she will continue, however wretchedly, to live. The city is not a place: it is a colossus that creates, shapes, and then devours its children.

And Mr. Moore's Belfast is not an appealing colossus, as Joyce's Dublin, for all its faults, often is. This northern city, rather, is the bastard child of a rigid Presbyterianism and a narrow Catholicism. There is no greatness here; there is only "respectability." There is no culture; there is only "gentility." Propriety and prejudice are the marks on Belfast's face.

What a middle-aged, intellectually and spiritually resourceless spinster can hope for in such a place is the painful burden of Mr. Moore's book. Judith Hearne, the spinster, hopes most longingly, of course, for "Mr. Right," for the man who, in answer to her endless rosaries and novenas, will grab her from the lonely despair of a damp room in a "genteel" boarding-house.

For a while Judith Hearne (but never the reader) thinks that "Mr. Right" has finally appeared in the person of James Madden, the aging, but still virile, American widower-brother of her landlady. Kneeling beside him at the eleven o'clock Mass on Sunday she prays that he might "be the one the Sacred Heart had chosen Himself to help her in her moments of pain and suffering." But he is not "the one." Instead, she learns, he is chiefly interested in her non-existent fortune, with which he plans to set up a "hamburg joint" in Dublin. She seeks solace, no longer in novenas, but in drink.

Her prayers had not been answered, so she doubts whether there was Anyone to hear them. Whiskey supplies the only release from her anguish. After she is asked to leave her "digs," she draws her last money from the bank to retire to the alcoholic comfort of a swank hotel. At the end of the book she is retired, forcibly, to a sanatorium, knowing at last that, for her at least, there is no hope, there is no love, there is no life worth living.

In resumé, Mr. Moore's novel may seem merely maudlin. But it is not. In its relentless pursuit of this woman's sorrow, in its refusal to sentimentalize or easily alleviate her plight, the book achieves a kind of vision, and it is a tragic vision. As she accepts, finally, the end of all her hopes, Judith Hearne attains, as the publishers claim, a certain grandeur. There is something awful in the death of even the meanest thing, and Judith Hearne, for all her delusions and mediocrity, had dreamed of those minimal things that all of us feel we have some right to expect from life—love, kindness, truth. Her defeat is the defeat, in a way, of all mankind, so relentless, final, and universal has Brian Moore made it.

And Belfast is the cruel agent of this defeat. In another place—a place touched by a more humane, less "respectable" spirit — Judith Hearne might have seized life's minimal demands. But the city made her a spinster and then it made her a drunk. And in the process, wagging its puritanical head, it first pitied, then despised her. The final failure is not hers but Belfast's.

In some of the best modern Irish writing we see an author's almost masochistic concern with the shortcomings of his own native culture, with its narrowness, cruelty and pride. Mr. Moore writes in this tradition. "We are a priest-ridden people!" Joyce cried. "Belfast, you joyless bigot, see what you've done!" Mr. Moore seems to say. The Irish writer, perhaps more than most others, feels a love-hate ambivalence towards the nation from which he can never really escape.

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A Kind of Grief

ONE FOOT IN EDEN. By Edwin Muir. Grove Press. $1.

By BETTE RICHART

THE GROVE PRESS offers, in its dollar Evergreen editions, books of poetry smartly produced and consistently aimed at that minority audience which takes poetry seriously and can seldom afford to buy any. All the selections so far, from John Logan to Edwin Muir, remind us that poetry is a demanding art, which in its integrity cannot be simplified or popularized, and we owe a vote of thanks to the Grove Press for these editions.

For some years Mr. Muir has been reminding us that reading a true poem is an act of concentration and imagination, after which no merely personal perspective will ever again be quite the same. He demonstrates clearly that reading a poem, looking at a picture, listening to music, are essentially different disciplines and pleasures.

A friend of mine once remarked lightly, "Let us not belittle surfaces; great paintings are made of them." He was himself an accomplished painter, and since he was speaking of techniques, not of philosophies, I think we shall have to agree with him. How different, though, are the techniques of poetry, its purpose being to go beneath surfaces at any cost, even at the cost of disarranging them. The dramatic question "What are patterns for?" is the established aesthetic position of poetry.

Listening to music also asks much of us, but its rewards are more immediate, even for the uninitiate, than the rewards of reading poetry. Poetry is a lonely thing, and both the writing and the reading of it involve, it seems to me, a kind of exalted drudgery. Its rewards crystallize slowly, like those of a long and painful analysis; sometimes we hardly recognize them as such at all. The solitary effort that a good poem asks, so often without conferring a conscious pleasure, is the flavor and spirit of the work of Edwin Muir.

He is a difficult poet. His language is grandly simple, like that of Frost, but his landscape is cheerless, like that of Hardy, and every echo is that single word, effort. The effect of his suffering animals and lovers is starkly Biblical; he leaves us feeling that expulsion from Eden is here and now, for all of us, and that we shall always have to bear a little more than we can bear. He is the most comfortless poet in English; always desolate but never despairing, he brings to mind C. S. Lewis's definition of joy as "a particular kind of unhappiness or grief . . . an unsatisfied desire itself more desirable than any other satisfaction." Naturally it is a joy that excludes pleasure, which depends upon satisfaction for its existence. "This is a difficult country, and our home," says Mr. Muir —a truth that harasses through being put so simply, as most of his best lines do.

His quiet erudition, ranging from Orpheus to Oedipus, from Milton to Kafka, erupts occasionally into a unique brutality; he refers to the Crucifixion as "the Killing," and calls a man "Anti-Christ" because he forgives "for love of sin, not of the sinner." In a group called "Effigies" and in a superb sonnet "The Lord," Mr. Muir rises to a level of moral indignation unusual in our pedantic century. It is high time. Wrath can purify, as love can, and both require heroic courage. That is all this tragic poet asks of us. But it may be enough.

Fine Simplicity

THE SEVEN ISLANDS. By Jon Godden. Knopf. $3.

By PATRICIA DONEGAN

WITH MUCH of the tranquility of the River Ganges about which she writes, Jon Godden presents us with the delightful little tale of an Indian holy man and his battle against the world in her new book, *The Seven Islands*.

The author shows an obvious familiarity and sympathy with her subject matter, and has a narrative style particularly well suited to it. The serenity of the holy man, Sadhu, and of the locale, his island home in the Ganges, is poignantly evident to the reader. There is a "once upon a time" feeling contained in an easy flow of description and events that goes hand in hand with penetrating characterization and some lively humor. The omission of dialogue is never felt. It is as if the aura of detachment which surrounds the Indian holy man would be shattered if one could hear him speak.

We are told that a certain Dr. Mishra, a follower of the god, Krishna, has decided to build a temple on an island adjoining that of which Sadhu is the sole inhabitant. The project seems, to the holy man, to be likely to extend to another island inhabited by his friends, the birds. He therefore embarks on a series of schemes, some of them Puckish in their deviltry, intended to frighten the intruders away. He uses his friends, Ram Kischen the untouchable and his son Prem, as well as Hari, the rich merchant, as his allies.

Here, Miss Godden is at her very best. She creates a real counterpoint of character, and handles the struggle within each one with skillful delicacy. She might have been tempted to pit good against evil—black against white—but the reader, although he is sympathetic to Sadhu's fight to keep intact the peace of his islands, nevertheless discovers flaws in the holy man and his friends as well as virtues in his enemies. The likable Ram Kishen, for instance, is discovered to be vindictive as well as unfortunate; Hari, the merchant, displays greed as well as intellect and compassion; and even Sadhu is found out in his pride, when he pits his will against that of the gods.

There is good story line here, too, for it is check and mate with each of the holy man's attempts to drive Mishra and his noisy followers away, and it is only when the gods take a hand that the repentant Sadhu discovers that in pitting his will against theirs he has lost much of the ascetic detachment he had striven for and acquired.

Miss Godden's descriptive and

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narrative style is clear and controlled. There is a simplicity in her writing, evident in the discreet use of adjectives, which gives it substance and dignity. There is nothing extraneous or unnecessary.

The Seven Islands is indeed the work of a very fine writer, who has succeeded in doing something very difficult; she has combined the remoteness of a completely narrated story with the intimacy of character revelation. She has described the impact of the world on the serenity of a natural kingdom, and has described the effects of this on her characters. Although there is little dialogue and we cannot hear Sadhu or Ram Kishen or the eagles speak, we would undoubtedly recognize them if they did.

Divided Loyalties

GRAY FOX: ROBERT E. LEE AND THE CIVIL WAR. By Burke Davis. Rinehart. $6.

By JOHN COURNOS

WHY *Gray Fox?* This reviewer asks the question, as has also the historian, Richard N. Current, who says: "I have never thought of Lee in that way." Nor will anyone else. Mr. Davis explains his title on the ground that Lee "made the most breath-taking moves out of what appeared to be military sagacity—but more often he handled his inferior force as if he could literally smell out the intent of the enemy, and he was seldom wrong." From this he goes on to the assertion that on the battlefield he was shrewd, courageous, audacious in attack and tenacious in defense. "The kindly face, fatherly beard and gentle manner have concealed too long one of the fiercest of the great captains." All this, unless you consider the "smell," scarcely describes the nature of a fox, which we usually regard as crafty, cunning, yes "foxy." Indeed, Mr. Davis devotes almost five hundred pages to build up and design a character who is at once noble, dignified, integrated, kindly, characterful—a figure who might be described in the phrase "a Christian gentleman."

Mr. Davis's narrative, except for a few inevitable flashbacks, begins in April 1861, leading up to the sorrowful night when, after prolonged prayer, Lee made the fateful decision to resign his commission in the United States Army and go to the defense of his native State. He had put off his decision until Virginia had voted to secede. It cannot be said that Lee had not foreseen this eventuality and his own reaction to it. As early as 1856 he had expressed the hope that harmony might be restored between North and South, declaring at the same time that slavery as an institution was "a moral and political evil . . . a greater evil to the white than to the black race." As late as the winter of 1860 he had clung to hope for the Union, feeling helpless, however, either "to hasten or retard" what was to be. He made the contradictory statement: "I shall never bear arms against the United States—but it may be necessary for me to carry a musket in defense of my native state, Virginia, in which case I shall try to do my duty."

No man could have been more opposed to secession; indeed he regarded it as "nothing but revolution." He looked upon it as "anarchy" and asserted that if he owned four million slaves in the South he would sacrifice them all

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to the Union. Yet he also said, "How can I draw my sword upon Virginia, my native state?" Offered the leadership of the United States Army by General Scott, for whom he entertained great respect, he refused, which provoked from Scott the remark that Lee was making the greatest mistake of his life. In a sense Lee was fully aware that he was making a "mistake." Even at this time he had no illusions about the South's victory over the North. He had more than an inkling, and confessed it, of the fact that the North's resources would ultimately overwhelm the South. Nor was he blind to the terrible cost in lives and destruction of property that would result from the conflict.

So we have a question here of judgment versus conscience; a question of loyalties, too, a question which is so much to the fore in our own time. It was in this terrible dilemma that lay the whole tragedy of Robert E. Lee. Had Lee's decision been the reverse of the one he had made and had he commanded the Union army as he could have, would the holocaust of lives and property, described so minutely in this chronicle, have been mitigated? His superb generalship, aided by the generalship of his "right hand," Stonewall Jackson, culminating in the horror of Chancellorsville—the cry of the wounded thousands is emphasized by the author—surely prolonged a conflict which at last ended in the terrible reprisals by Sherman.

Mr. Davis limits himself in this biography only to the war years. He tells nothing about Lee before or after. And the chronicle of campaigns and their horrors is, perhaps, the most impressive thing in this book.

REVIEWERS

William P. Clancy, until last year an associate editor of The Commonweal, is a frequent contributor.

Bette Richart contributes poetry and criticism to various literary journals.

Patricia Donegan is a free-lance writer now living in New York.

John Cournos is a well-known critic and anthologist of Americana.

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